

LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL**Minutes of the proceedings of the Development Committee Meeting of Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council held in the Civic Centre, Lisburn, BT27 4RL on Thursday, 3 March 2022 at 6.00 pm****PRESENT IN
THE CHAMBER:**

Alderman a Grehan (Chairperson)
 Deputy Mayor, Councillor T Mitchell
 Aldermen D Drysdale and A G Ewart MBE
 Councillors A Givan, D Honeyford, C McCready,
 R McLernon and A Swan

OTHER MEMBER:

Alderman W J Dillon

**PRESENT IN A
REMOTE LOCATION:**

Councillor H Legge, (Vice Chairperson)
 Councillors S Carson, J Gallen, M Guy and
 G McCleave,

**OTHER MEMBERS
PRESENT IN A
REMOTE LOCATION:**

Aldermen J Baird and A Gowan

IN ATTENDANCE:

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council

Director of Service Transformation (Council Chamber)
 Head of Economic Development (Council Chamber)
 Head of Assets (Council Chamber)
 Head of Planning & Capital Development (Remote Location)
 Programmes Manager (Remote Location)
 Programmes Coordinator (Remote Location)
 Member Services Officer (BS) (Council Chamber)
 Member Services/PCSP Administrative Assistant (Council Chamber)

Commencement of Meeting

The Chairperson, Alderman A Grehan extended a welcome to all present to the March meeting of the Committee. The Chairperson advised that the meeting was being live streamed to enable members of the public to hear and see the proceedings and extended a welcome to those watching on the livestream.

At this point, Member Services/PCSP Administrative Assistant read out the names of the Elected Members in attendance at the meeting.

Commencement of Meeting (Cont'd)

The Vice Chairperson, Councillor H Legge, joined the meeting at 6.02 pm.

The Chairperson stated that, whilst the meeting was being live streamed, unauthorised recording was not permitted, as per the Council's Standing Orders. The Chairperson also reminded everyone to ensure mobile phones were turned off or on silent mode for the duration of the meeting and proceeded to outline the evacuation procedures in the case of an emergency.

The Chairperson asked that any Member entering or leaving the meeting to advise the Member Services accordingly so that this might be accurately reflected in the minutes.

1. Apologies

It was agreed to record apologies for non-attendance at the meeting on behalf of The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Alderman S Martin, and Councillor U Mackin.

Later in the meeting, under item agenda item 7 (Any Other Business) at the request of Councillor A Swan it was agreed that apologies for non-attendance at the meeting be recorded on behalf of Councillor Jenny Palmer.

2. Declarations of Interest

The Chairperson invited Members to declare any Conflicts of Interest they might have in relation to the business of the meeting and reminded them of the requirement that they complete Declaration of Interest forms in this regard, which had been provided at the meeting.

There were no Declarations of Interest declared at the meeting.

3. Report by Director of Service Transformation

3.1 Performance/Budgets - Service Transformation

The Director of Service Transformation's report outlined the background and key issues in relation to the quarterly reports in respect of performance and budgets for the Service Transformation Directorate.

The Committee had been furnished with a copy of the undernoted documents:

- a paper outlining the key performance indicators for Q3 (October-December 2021) for the operational metrics/service KPIs for the Service Transformation Directorate, and

3.1 Performance/Budgets - Service Transformation (Cont'd)

- the Service Transformation Summary Budget report to the end of Q3 of the current financial year.

The Director elaborated on a number of the key issues in relation to the performance summary report and also the summary budget report.

Councillor A Gowan joined the meeting at 6.08pm.

The Director and the Head of Planning and Capital Development responded to a question from a Member in relation to the statutory consultation process in respect of planning applications which, in the Member's opinion, resulted in the lengthy processing times for many planning applications. The Head of Planning and Capital Development assured the Member that all planning applications are triaged in the first instance. In their responses both the Director and the Head of Planning and Capital Development made a number of comments in relation to the Northern Ireland Audit Office's recently published report on the effectiveness of Planning in Northern Ireland. It was noted that further reports on this review of planning would come forward to both the Planning Committee and the Development Committee in due course.

It was proposed by Alderman A G Ewart, seconded by Councillor A Givan, and agreed to recommend that the reports on performance and budgets, including the key issues outlined, be noted.

4. Report by the Head of Economic Development

4.1 Interim Labour Market Partnership formation and planning - Update

The Head of Economic Development's report outlined an update in relation to the formation and planning of the Interim Labour Market Partnership. It was noted that the Council had been working with the Department for Communities (DfC) and local partners in the design and development of an Interim Action Plan for the new Lisburn and Castlereagh Labour Market Partnership in order to secure a letter of offer from the Department. The Interim Action Plan had been submitted and re-submitted to DfC for staged assessments in October and November 2021 and also January 2022.

The Head of Economic Development elaborated on the key issues in relation to this initiative including finance and resource implications for the Council.

It was proposed by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor T Mitchell, seconded by Councillor R McLernon, and agreed to recommend that:

4.1 Interim Labour Market Partnership formation and planning – Update (Cont'd)

- a) the update report on the formation and planning of the Interim Labour Market Partnership be noted, and
- b) the Committee continues to signpost any potential programme participants or contacts to the Programmes team.

4.2 Closure of NI Rural Development Programme 2014- 2020 and Lagan Rural Partnership Ltd Local Action Group

The Head of Economic Development outlined the background and key issues in connection with the closure of the NI Rural Development Programme (NIRDP) 2014-2020 and the Lagan Rural Partnership Local Action Group (LAG).

A copy of the final Lagan Rural Partnership Newsletter had been furnished to the Committee.

The report circulated outlined the final grant payments that had been administered under the four funding schemes operated by Lagan Rural Partnership.

The Head of Economic Development reported that on Monday 28th March 2022 the LAG would meet for the final time, it being noted that many of the LAG members had given many years of voluntary service to this organisation in order to improve the lives of rural residents and bolster rural businesses. The final meeting of the LAG would be followed by a meal in Lighters Restaurant and also attended by The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Alderman S Martin, the Chairperson of the Development Committee, Alderman A Grehan, and Council Officers.

Alderman A G Ewart, Chairman of the LAG, having referred to the success of the Lagan Rural Partnership over the past number of years put on record his thanks and appreciation to the efforts of the Council's Rural Development team and also to the commitment and support of the social partners on the LAG, a number of which had been involved from the start of the Rural Development Programme.

Alderman W J Dillon, a member of the LAG, expressed thanks to the Chairman of the LAG, Alderman A G Ewart, for his efforts and commitment to the LAG, and also the manner in which he had chaired the group for many years. Alderman Dillon also commended the efforts of the Officers and staff on the LAG team which had ensured a very successful programme of activity across the rural communities.

The Chairperson, Alderman A Grehan, drew the Committee's attention to the tribute to the late Councillor Margaret Tolerton who had been a member of the LAG since 2009 and had also held the position of Chair of the LAG. The late Councillor Tolerton who had played an active role in the delivery of two of the NI Rural Development Programmes in this region and had been a great advocate for rural communities and businesses, sadly passed away in February 2021.

4.2 Closure of NI Rural Development Programme 2014- 2020 and Lagan Rural Partnership Ltd Local Action Group (Cont'd)

It was proposed by Councillor A Swan, seconded by Councillor A Givan, and agreed to recommend that:

- a) the planned closure of the NIRDP and the LAG Board be noted,
- b) the Committee extends appreciation for the contribution of the LAG Members and for the efforts of the Council Officers in managing this programme, and
- c) an update report be brought back to the Committee regarding any future replacement schemes arising from the Rural Framework Strategy currently being finalised by DAERA.

4.3 Delivery of a new Rural Business Development Grant Scheme funded by DAERA under the Tackling Rural Poverty and Social Isolation programme (TRPSI).

The Head of Economic Development outlined the background and key issues in relation to the delivery of a new Rural Business Development Grant Scheme which was being funded by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) as part of the TRPSI Programme.

The Head of Economic Development reported that DAERA had indicated that the fourth call for applications under the Rural Business Development Grant Scheme was to open in May 2022 and was expected to close at the end of that month. It was noted that as DAERA were currently developing a business case for the new programme not all of the details were confirmed at this stage. It was noted that as with the current programme, it was proposed that the Council also administers the scheme in rural Belfast, for which it would receive an additional modest income.

It was proposed by Alderman A G Ewart, seconded by Councillor A Swan, and agreed to recommend that the roll out of a fourth tranche of the Rural Business Development Grant Scheme in the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council area and rural Belfast areas, commencing in May 2022, be approved.

5. Confidential Report by the Director of Service Transformation

The Chairperson, Alderman A Grehan, advised of the reasons for confidentiality in respect of the items contained in the Director's Confidential Report as follows:

Assessment Panel Recommendations for the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council Call 3 ESF Match Funding Scheme: confidential due to information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person or organisation (including the Council holding that information)

5. Confidential Report by the Director of Service Transformation (Cont'd)

Food and Drink Campaign Evaluation – 2022-2023 Proposal: confidential due to information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person or organisation (including the Council holding that information)

Request for Flexible Retirement: confidential due to information likely to reveal the identity of an individual

Covid Recovery Small Settlements Regeneration Programme – Update: confidential due to information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person or organisation (including the Council holding that information)

It was proposed by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor T Mitchell, seconded by Councillor A Swan, and agreed that the Confidential Business be considered “in Committee” in the absence of press or members of the public.

At this juncture the livestream was stopped for the purpose of consideration of the confidential business.

“In Committee”

5.1 Verbal Update - Independent Examination of the LDP’s Draft Plan Strategy

The Chairperson, Alderman A Grehan, updated the Committee in connection with the web link that had been issued to Members in respect of the Independent Examination of the Council’s draft Plan Strategy which was scheduled to commence on 28th March 2022 at 10.30 am.

5.2 Assessment Panel Recommendations for the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council Call 3 ESF Match Funding Scheme

The Head of Economic Development presented this item of business.

The Committee considered a report by the Director of Service Transformation outlining the background and key issues in connection with the Assessment Panel Recommendations for the Council’s Call 3 ESF Match Funding Scheme which was managed by the Department for the Economy (DfE) for the Northern Ireland EU European Social Fund Programme.

Appended documents included a) Programme Guidance from DfE, b) LCCC Call 3 ESF Matching Funding Scheme – Guidance and scoring criteria, and c) a paper detailing the outcome of the Assessment Panel Recommendations.

Following a verbal communication from DfE the Head of Economic Development provided a further update to the Committee during which he outlined a proposed methodology for

5.2 Assessment Panel Recommendations for the Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council Call 3 ESF Match Funding Scheme (Cont'd)

the allocation of any remaining budget should one or more of the successful applicants not require their agreed portion of this funding.

The Head of Economic Development responded to questions from the Committee in connection with the above Match Funding Scheme.

It was proposed by Councillor D Honeyford, seconded by Alderman D Drysdale, and agreed to recommend that:

- a) the outcomes of the assessment panels held on the 10th February 2022 and 14th February 2022 resulting in the Council's full budget allocation for the ESF match funding scheme being awarded for the coming year, as outlined in the report, be approved, and
- b) in the event of not all of the total budget being allocated to the successful applicants, the methodology to award any remaining budget to the 'next in line' applicant(s), as outlined by the Head of Economic Development, be approved.

5.3 Food and Drink Campaign Evaluation – 2022-2023 Proposal

The Committee considered a report by the Director of Service Transformation which outlined the background and key issues in connection with an evaluation of the Council's Food and Drink Campaign and proposals for the 2022-2023 Campaign.

A series of evaluation reports that reviewed key activities across the various locations for the period September - December 2021 had been furnished to the Committee.

At the outset the Director addressed the Committee and thanked Members for their support in attending a number of the events organized as part of the Food and Drink Campaign and also for feedback received.

The Head of Economic Development presented the remainder of this item of business during which he responded to a number of comments and questions from the Committee on issues raised.

A Member expressed thanks to the Officers in the Economic Development Unit for their efforts in organising the Food and Drink Campaign events, a number of which had been organised at short notice.

Councillor J Gallen left the meeting during consideration of this item of business (6.56 pm).

It was proposed by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor T Mitchell, seconded by Councillor A Swan, and agreed to recommend that:

5.3 Food and Drink Campaign Evaluation – 2022-2023 Proposal (Cont'd)

- a) the content of the various event evaluations, as circulated, and also the comments raised by Members during the discussion in relation local traders and visitor attraction, be noted,
- b) a letter from the Committee be sent to Babble conveying its thanks and appreciation in relation to the success of the Food and Drink Campaign to date,
- c) the 2022-2023 Food and Drink Campaign be put out to public tender to include a series of costed options for Members to consider, as outlined in the report circulated,
- d) a redacted version of the Food and Drink Campaign confidential report be published following adoption of the Committee minutes by Council on 22 March 2022, and
- e) further update reports on recommendations for the Food and Drink Campaign, as appropriate, be presented to the Committee in due course

5.4 Request for Flexible Retirement

It was proposed by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor T Mitchell, seconded by Councillor A Givan, and agreed to recommend that the request for flexible retirement, as set out in the Director of Service Transformation's report and as supported by the appended business case, be approved.

5.5 Covid Recovery Small Settlements Regeneration Programme - Update

The Committee considered an update report by the Director of Service Transformation outlining the background and key issues in connection with the Covid Recovery Small Settlements Regeneration Programme.

The Head of Economic Development presented this item of business.

A copy the letter of offer received from the Department for Communities on 4th of February approving the final grant amount had been furnished to the Committee.

It was proposed by Councillor C McCreedy, seconded by Councillor D Honeyford, and agreed to recommend that:

- a) a framework solution be taken forward to procure an employer agent to deliver the Covid Recovery Small Settlements Regeneration Programme,
- b) a Small Settlements Regeneration Officer be recruited on a fixed term contract of 12 months, with the possibility of an extension, in line with programme delivery,

5.5 Covid Recovery Small Settlements Regeneration Programme – Update (Cont'd)

- c) delegated authority be granted to the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the Development Committee and the Director of Service Transformation to agree the guidance and Terms of Reference for the delivery of the Rural Investment Fund, the Heritage Shop Front Grant Scheme and the Shop Front Scheme, and
- d) the principles of the funding as outlined in the report circulated, be approved

It was also agreed that the matter of the replacement signs in Moira be considered and if agreed, these are to be expedited if possible. Members asked that the proposals be taken back to Committee for agreement.

6. Any Other Confidential Business

6.1 Good News Story for Local Company – PR Issues

A Member made a number of comments in relation to the importance of good news stories, such as a recent good news story for a local Lisburn company, being communicated to and promoted by the Council in the first instance.

The Director of Service Transformation made further comment on this matter and undertook to inform the Head of Administration and Communications of the Committee's concerns.

It was agreed that a letter from the Committee be sent to the organisation concerned to include the issues raised during the discussion.

Councillor A Gowan left the meeting at 7.18 pm.

6.2 Former Friends Meeting House

The Director of Service Transformation responded to a question from a Member in relation to the sale of the former Friends Meeting House, and undertook to report back to the Committee when the sale had been completed.

6.3 BBC Spotlight Programme on Waste Management

A Member drew the Committee's attention to the BBC Spotlight Programme on the subject of waste management which would be aired next Tuesday, 8th March 2022. Alderman Drysdale made a number of comments in connection with the subject matter of this Spotlight programme.

Resumption of Normal Business

It was proposed by Councillor A Swan, seconded by Alderman A G Ewart, and agreed to come out of Committee and normal business was resumed. The livestream was re-commenced at 7.25 pm.

7. Any Other Business

7.1 Apology for Non-Attendance for Councillor Jenny Palmer Councillor A Swan

Councillor A Swan advised that he had received a text message earlier that day from Councillor Jenny Palmer asking that he submit her apology for non-attendance at the meeting. Councillor Swan apologised for not having put forward this apology earlier in the meeting. It was agreed that Councillor Jenny Palmer's apology be recorded.

7.2 Independent Review of Invest NI Councillor S Carson

Councillor S Carson referred to the above-mentioned additional item that had been uploaded to Decision Time that afternoon and enquired from the Director of Service Transformation if he was aware of any business that had received a letter of offer from Invest NI and which had subsequently been reneged upon. Councillor Carson stated that he had knowledge of one such case. In response, the Director advised that one business had approached the Council on a similar matter and that the Council would make representations on their behalf at the next scheduled meeting.

At this point the Chairperson, Alderman A Grehan, also drew Members' attention to the additional item on the Independent Review of Invest NI and the associated Call for Evidence, the contents of which were noted.

7.3 Hillsborough Forest Park Sculpture Trail - Update Councillor C McCready

At the request of Councillor C McCready, the Director of Service Transformation provided an update in regard to the Hillsborough Forest Park Sculpture Trail, it being noted that an official commissioning of the first sculpture would take place on Friday, 11 March, 2022. The associated press coverage had been issued by DAERA. The Director noted comments from Councillor McCready in connection with any necessary notices issued or signs erected to keep the general public and visitors to the Forest Park informed of the timescales for completion of this scheme.

The Director undertook to inform all Members when the Hillsborough Forest Park scheme was completed in its entirety.

7.4 Russian Invasion of Ukraine
Chairperson, Alderman A Grehan

The Chairperson, Alderman A Grehan, having referred to the ongoing crisis in Ukraine asked that everyone keep the families and people in Ukraine in their thoughts and prayers at this difficult time.

Conclusion of Meeting

The Chairperson, Alderman A Grehan, thanked Members for their attendance and there being no other business the meeting was terminated at 7.30 pm.

Chairperson